

Commissioner's Weekly Field Memo
Friday, November 9, 2012

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Action Item Calendar

Today (November 9): [Presidential Scholar](#) names due
Extended: Wednesday (November 14): [Storm damage](#)
Extended: (Nov. 16): PARCC Readiness Survey (below)
November 16: Notify principals re SurveyWorks (below)
December 7: [Nonpublic-textbook reimbursement](#) form due

Notes from Acting Commissioner Abbott

1. Central Falls selected as potential recipient of federal innovation grant

The U.S. Department of Education announced yesterday (November 8) that the Department has selected the Central Falls School District as among the 20 potential recipients of an Investing in Innovation grant to support “promising but relatively untested projects with high potential for impact on student achievement.” The Department selected Central Falls from among 727 applications, and Central Falls was the only school district among the 20 potential grant recipients!

The proposal from Central Falls, called “We Are a Village,” focuses on “improving school readiness and academic achievement of young, high-need children, from preschool to third grade, by using the research-based Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework to shape our parent and family engagement strategies.”

In order to receive its grant, Central Falls must secure private matching funds by December 7 equal to 15 percent of the grant amount. The Department will announce the award winners by the end of the year.

On behalf of RIDE, I am very proud that Central Falls has received this recognition, and RIDE will work with the leadership team in the district to help ensure that this grant is put into action to help improve teaching and learning for the students in Central Falls.

2. Rhode Islanders urged to pledge support for public education

In a Field Memo in September, we notified you that a coalition of people and organizations in support of public education created a public campaign called “I Pledge” to convey their key message points:

- Working together, we can ensure Rhode Island has the best education in the nation.
- In order for the state’s education system to achieve great results, we need great educators, great leaders, great administrators, great school committees, great parents, and great students.
- Educators need everyone’s support – we are all in this together.

Perhaps you have seen the promotional announcements for “I Pledge” on television and on advertising displays, or maybe you have heard public-service announcements on the radio. To date nearly 8,000 Rhode Islanders have joined the campaign and pledged their support for public education. We would like to double the number of pledges, at the least. I encourage you to spread the word in your schools and your community. School leaders, teachers, parents, students, and community members all have a role to play, and we would like to see as many people as possible from a broad range of communities and constituencies participating in this campaign.

Please encourage people to visit www.educationpledgeri.org to make their own pledges.

Participants in the campaign include the Office of the Governor, the Rhode Island Association of School Committees, the Rhode Island Association of School Superintendents, the Rhode Island Association of School Principals, the National Education Association Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals, the Rhode Island Foundation, representatives of charter public schools, and RIDE. The campaign is funded by The Rhode Island Foundation and The Nellie Mae Education Foundation. I hope that many from your community will participate as well.

3. Storm damage reports due Wednesday

We have heard from many but not all LEAs regarding damages, losses, and school cancellations during the week of Hurricane Sandy. We have extended the reporting deadline to next Wednesday. If we do not hear from you by the end of the day on Wednesday, we will assume that your schools were cancelled for two days during Hurricane Sandy and that your LEA suffered no property damage or losses during the storm.

Please note again that we are collecting these reports for aggregate information only and they do not constitute official requests for reimbursement or claims. Please send your reports, if necessary, to:

Elliot.krieger@ride.ri.gov

From RIDE

Data Systems:

4. RIDE encourages LEAs to participate in procurement process for Student Information System

In partnership with the Providence School District, RIDE is soliciting responses from qualified vendors to provide a multi-district Student Information System. To access the RFP information, please visit www.purchasing.ri.gov. Click on Bidding Opportunities, then State Agency Bids. Type in the bid number 7458219, then search. Click on the number under the bid number column.

The submission deadline for bids is 11:30 a.m. on November 2 . LEAs are welcomed to participate in this procurement process. The Woonsocket School District has already joined, and we encourage all LEAs interested in participating in this partnership to contact Carolyn Dias, at Carolyn.dias@ride.ri.gov no later than **November 16**.

Additional LEA up-front commitments will allow for greater leverage for more services at lower prices.

Training:

5. RIDE to host second session in Building a Data-Ready District seminar series

RIDE is hosting a second “Building a Data-Ready District” seminar, following last week’s well-attended session. All Technology Directors, Data Managers, and other data entry/collections staff members are strongly encouraged to attend. As a reminder, these seminars will provide a general introduction to the Data Quality Initiative, a presentation on data-quality best practices, and a breakout session for LEAs to collaborate on best practices and to collectively solve

problems. Attendees also receive a resource kit with self-assessments, NCES training guides with CDs and sample forms, and other tools to help manage district data. Seminar 1 feedback survey responses are available at <http://www.ride.ri.gov/DataWorks/dataquality.aspx> to provide you with a sense of the conversations going on around the state.

The second seminar, covering the same content with an additional focus on small districts and charter public schools, is scheduled for **Thursday** (November 15) at RIDE. Please encourage your data staff members to register through the Workshop Calendar, or simply forward the link below directly to the appropriate staff. Questions about the location and logistics may be directed to Jessica Murphy, at jessica.murphy@ride.ri.gov, and questions about content may be directed to Andrew Keller, at andrew.keller@ride.ri.gov.

Seminar 2 registration:

<http://www.eride.ri.gov/WorkshopReg/viewWorkshop.aspx?workshopid=625>

Building a Data-Ready District: Data Quality and the Enrollment Census

Date: Thursday (November 15)

Time: 9 – 11 a.m.

Who: Data Managers, Technology Directors, and other data entry staff

Where: RIDE offices, 255 Westminster Street, Room 260, Providence.

Parking passes will be available for the Rhode Island Convention Center (1 Sabin Street).

6. RIDE launches Professional Practice videos for teachers using the Rhode Island Model evaluations

RIDE is thrilled to announce that the Framework for Teaching Effectiveness Series (FFTES), an online, video-based, training program for teachers that explores the eight components of the Rhode Island Model (RI Model) Teacher Professional Practice rubric, is now available to all teachers implementing the RI Model. The FFTES mirrors the Framework for Teaching Proficiency System that evaluators have been using, and it includes interactive tools, reflection activities, and practice exercises to give teachers formative feedback on their understanding of the Professional Practice rubric. Teachers can access the FFTES through the RIDEmap portal. The FFTES is an optional resource that LEAs can decide how to best utilize to meet their local needs; step-by-step directions and suggested uses for the FFTES are available on the RIDE website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/Training.aspx>.

Action Items:

7. PARCC Readiness Survey deadline extended to November 16 – *Action Item*

There are two major tasks that LEAs must undertake in order to ensure PARCC readiness. LEAs must update their School Device Inventories and the PARCC Readiness Survey. Please see the complete instructions about these tasks and FAQs posted on the RIDE website, at:

http://www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/DOCS/PARCC/PARCC_Technology_Readiness_Tool_2012_Update.pdf

Sample test questions will be available in the spring of 2013; if the inventory and survey are not completed your district will not have access to these questions.

These tasks must be completed by Friday, **November 16**.

If you need your PARCC Readiness Tool password reset, have questions, or need any other help, please e-mail Mike Ferry, at Michael.Ferry@ride.ri.gov, or Jaime Viti, at Jaime.Viti@ride.ri.gov.

8. Principals asked to identify SurveyWorks coordinators – *Action Item*

Our SurveyWorks Team is busy preparing for this year's survey. In the coming week, the team will be reaching out to new site coordinators to schedule trainings. The training window for new site coordinators is between November 19 and November 30. Site coordinators who have already been trained will be able to access refresher materials on the SurveyWorks site. Some schools have not identified site coordinators. Please forward this message to your principals and remind them to identify a coordinator as soon as possible by contacting the SurveyWorks team: surveyworks@wested.org or (877) 787-5725. Thank you.

Assessments:

9. RIDE extends timeline for entering RI Alternate Assessment student-assessment data

Based on feedback from LEA leadership regarding concerns about teachers not having sufficient time to enter student-assessment data from the RI Alternate Assessment (RIAA) into the ProFile system, RIDE is extending the window to enter student-assessment data into the ProFile system for the first two collection periods. The timelines for the third collection period will not change. The updated timelines for collection periods one and two are outlined below. All students still must be assessed before the end of the collection period. This extension only extends the time provided for educators to wrap up and complete administrative review.

Please ensure that all educators plan appropriately to complete the assessment, enter student-assessment data, and conduct an administrative review within the appropriate timelines. School and district administration should work with classroom teachers to develop a plan to ensure that valid and reliable assessment data are submitted in a timely manner. Planning resources were shared at the fall trainings and can also be found on the RIAA page on our website, under Test Administration, Data, and Reports:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/Altassessment.aspx>

Here is a summary of the new timeline:

RI ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT 2012-13	
NOVEMBER 13	End Collection Period 1
NOVEMBER 14 -DECEMBER 14	Wrap-up and Administrative Review
DECEMBER 14	ProFile Locks Collection Period 1
FEBRUARY 1	End Collection Period 2

FEBRUARY 4- MARCH 1	Wrap-up and Administrative Review
MARCH 1	ProFile Locks Collection Period 2
APRIL 5	End Collection Period 3
APRIL 8- MAY 2	Wrap-up and Administrative Review
MAY 3	UPS Pick up of All Datafolios ProFile Locks

Educator Evaluations:

10. RIDE extends Framework for Teaching Proficiency System proficiency-test deadline for evaluators

RIDE has extended the deadline for completion of the Framework for Teaching Proficiency System (FFTPS) proficiency test. All evaluators should plan to complete and pass the two stages of the test by June 15, 2013. The additional time to complete this component of training allows evaluators to use the tool more fully as it is intended: to deeply understand the application of the rubric in classroom practice and to complete the calibration tool as a formative measure of progress. We recommend that LEAs establish benchmarks of progress toward completing all of the training and calibration work between now and June 15.

Some individuals have asked if the FFTPS Observer Training and Proficiency Test are required. Although RIDE is not imposing a consequence for non-completion of the FFTPS or failure to participate in face-to-face trainings or the video-system training, both are part of the approved model. As you know, the evaluation-system standards outline that all approved evaluation models must provide robust training for evaluators and must assure that evaluators can make

accurate judgments. The training plan is part of the approved model. Any principal who steps outside of any portion of the approved model puts evaluation results at risk. For example, the approved model requires a minimum of three observations. If only two observations are conducted and a teacher challenges his or her final effectiveness rating, the rating is at risk because the approved process was not followed. The same is true for completing the outlined training for the model.

This is the most intensive year for training. During subsequent years, the time needed for face-to-face or on-line training will not be as extensive. We know a lot is being asked of principals this year, and everyone has been committed to high-quality implementation. Our goal is to implement our new evaluation and support systems with the highest levels of accuracy and integrity.

Responses to other frequently asked questions about the FFTPS are available on the RIDE website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/RIModelFAQ.aspx>.

From the U.S. Department of Education

11. Department provides resources to help in recovery from Hurricane Sandy

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students, is working closely with other federal agencies, such as FEMA, HHS, and USDA, to ensure continuation of critical services to schools. In addition, the Department has established a toll-free Hurricane Sandy Hotline (1-855-385-9985), a Hurricane Sandy e-mail address

(EdSchoolInfo@ed.gov), and a website (www.ed.gov/sandy/). Each will be regularly updated with guidance and links to helpful resources.

We are committed to responding quickly to those who contact the Department with questions or issues. The phone and the e-mail box will be staffed by individuals who have experience in previous natural-disaster recovery efforts.

A resource document entitled “Building Emergency Management Capacity” is attached.

From other organizations

12. Health coalition announces video/poster contest on safety

We are thrilled to announce the 2013 Safety is No Accident contest and would like to invite all high-school students from Rhode Island to participate. Unintentional injury is the number-one killer of individuals between the ages of 1 and 44. Most unintentional injuries are avoidable and preventable. The 2012 Safety is No Accident video/poster contest was a great success. We received numerous high-quality and creative entries. Winners were chosen and prizes were awarded to the students by Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Roberts at the Rhode Island State House. The winning entries can be seen on our website:

<http://www.rhodeislandhospital.org/services/injury-prevention-center/health-advocacy-programs/2012-safety-is-no-accident-video-poster-contest> .

The Injury Prevention Center at Rhode Island Hospital, the Rhode Island Public Health Association, AAA of Southern New England, the Rhode Island Committee on Occupational Safety and Health (RICOSH), and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) are teaming up to put together the 2013 contest. By participating in the contest, students will learn how to recognize, avoid, and communicate about safety hazards where they live, where they work, and when they are on the road. Students may work alone or in groups of up to four members. Students have the option of creating a 30-second video, a poster, or an essay of no more than 500 words that sends an important safety message to their peers and community. The prizes will be awarded by Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Roberts at a ceremony at the Rhode Island State House on April 4, 2013. Cash prizes will be awarded to winners in all categories; details TBD. In addition, the winning poster will be displayed on a billboard for one month courtesy of Lamar advertising, and the winning video will be shown at a Pawsox game. For more details about the contest and to submit your entry please use the following online entry form:

<https://dinamorrissey.wufoo.com/forms/2013-safety-is-no-accident-contest-entry-form/>

You can also e-mail your questions to SafetyisNoAccidentcontest@gmail.com and follow contest updates on our Facebook page, at:

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/safetyisnoaccident> .

We hope that you will encourage your students to participate in this exciting contest. Please forward this e-mail to your art teachers, media teachers, and anyone else who may be

interested in sharing this information with their students. By working to raise awareness about critical safety issues, we can begin to reduce the number of accidental deaths and injuries. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Commissioner/fieldmemos/default.aspx>